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**COMMENTS ON PAPER DATED MAY 21, 1951, ENTITLED:
"PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD - CONCEPT OF THE
ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDE DYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGICAL
OPERATIONS IN THE COLD WAR"**

The subject paper is a personal expression of General Magruder designed to be helpful in the establishment of the new Psychological Strategy Board. While most of the concepts in the paper are ones with which I would heartily agree, there are a few points to which I would take exception. These differences are mainly matters of degree rather than of kind, but it may be useful to try and express them.

The following principles seem to me to be basic to the successful operation of the Board:

1. Our psychological program will succeed only as personnel and offices responsible for detailed planning and implementation perform their functions with greater and greater efficiency. To impose a large super-structure on top of them and to remove many of their functions in whole or in part would, I believe, introduce new requirements for coordination and liaison activities, deal a serious blow to the morale of persons now engaged in psychological operations, and in the end result in diminishing rather than increasing the efficiency of their work. Activities of the new PSB staff can result either in stifling the initiative of lower echelons or in inspiring them to greater efficiency. Every effort should be made to see that the latter result is achieved.
2. With respect to psychological programming, the principal need which the new Board and its staff can fill is that of formulating very broad government-wide policies, especially such policies as are presently beyond the competence of any single department or agency. The application of these policies to concrete operating situations should be entrusted to the individual agencies. It should be noted that the tendency in many administrative structures is to secure the services of competent experts and then to overload them with details to such a degree that they are unable to devote more than a very few minutes of their time to the larger picture. This is especially true in the field of psychological operations. To over-simplify the matter, it might be said that more exhaustive attention is often given comparatively minor matters of detail than to broad questions of major importance. Consequently, it is of utmost importance that the staff of the new Board and the Director himself should not be overloaded

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with detailed matters of administration or implementation. This is one of the principal reasons for keeping the staff small and whenever possible arranging for the delegation of functions to existing agencies.

3. The number of individuals in the United States who are competent to serve on the staff of the new Board is very small indeed. A few might be obtained from outside the government, but the majority of them are already occupied in existing agencies. If we strip these agencies of their most highly-qualified policy personnel, we will have lost more than we have gained since, as noted in one above, the ultimate success or failure of our psychological operations will depend most of all upon the efficiency of the individual agencies.

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There are several points at which General Magruder's paper may conflict with these principles, although it is possible that the apparent conflict rests in the manner in which certain passages are interpreted. The following comments are offered by way of example:

In paragraph 19 on page 6 it is stated that the staff should be responsible under the Director for the formulation and promulgation in practical operating terms of coordinated world-wide and regional psychological policies, objectives and programs. It is further stated that this function cannot be delegated to operating agencies. It is my feeling that the staff should in fact delegate most of the preliminary work in this connection to operating agencies and should itself be responsible only for the final formulation and promulgation. Furthermore, this formulation should not attempt to be in "operating" terms if this means that the needs of each medium must be spelled out, nor should it be in "regional" terms if this means that detailed consideration should be given to the differing requirements of each country. The implementation of policy by various communications media and the requirements of specific regions could more efficiently be spelled out in detail by experts in the existing agencies.

In paragraph 19c, also on page 6, it is said that the staff should make a continuous evaluation of the results of operations with a view to making prompt adjustments in the programs when necessary. My objection may be merely a matter of wording, but I feel that the words "make a prompt adjustment" implies a degree of involvement in operations which was not contemplated by the Presidential directive. Perhaps it would be adequate to say merely that the staff should recommend such adjustments to the operating agencies.

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Paragraph 20 on page 6 expresses the fear that if the Director and staff give themselves up to pondering and planning, we would have succeeded only in establishing another Ivory Tower. Herein, I believe, there is a difference only in emphasis, but I believe that this wording might obscure the fact that at the present time our detailed planning is often far in advance of our long-term planning. Would it not be better to encourage the Director and staff to "ponder and plan" as long as this cerebration is harnessed to the realities of operations. As stated above, we have not given our most qualified thinkers an opportunity to think. Let us insure that some of them at least have an opportunity to do so in the staff of PSB.

Paragraph 21 on page 6 suggests that the staff should include certain regional and functional chiefs who are outstanding experts in their respective geographical and functional areas. Certainly it is to be hoped that personnel can be found for PSB who will have certain regional or functional qualifications, but PSB should not try to compete with the operating agencies when it comes to regional or functional experts. Instead, PSB policy experts should plan to rely principally on the regional and functional specialists in the various agencies.

Paragraphs 23 and 24 suggest the creation of a "strategy group." It is my feeling that the entire senior staff of the PSB should be considered such a strategy group and that to create a special organization so entitled within the PSB staff would imply that the rest of the PSB staff would be concerned with details which might more appropriately be left to the operating agencies.

In general, my feeling is that the PSB should strive to conduct its business with as small a staff as possible and should attempt to perform only such substantive tasks as are in addition to those now being performed in the operating departments and agencies. It may be that this conception is not far removed from that expressed in General Magruder's paper, but that paper may also be interpreted as advocating a large staff which would to a large extent duplicate or supplant certain functions of existing agencies. These comments, therefore, are intended only to highlight the differing interpretations which are possible and to assist in their resolution.

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